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WALTER LAQUEUR
What to Read About Terrorism

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in the twentieth century, one cannot simply insist, as Furet does, on the attraction of the anti-fascist myth, but also on appeals of regimentation, what La Boetie called *la servitude volontaire*.

To conclude, it is not enough to say, with Furet, that communism (Leninism) was an illusion, or together with Malia that it was a "house of cards." The persistence of totalitarian mentalities is inseparable from the institutional order created by Bolshevism, and especially the central role of the Party, including the universe of symbolic representations and myths that explain the paradoxical nature of the Bolshevik (communist) engagement. The breakdown of state socialist regimes does not mean the end of a certain totalizing yearning to which Leninism tried to respond (more often than not in destructive, expansionist, terrorist forms). It is thus important to keep in mind the significance of the political and symbolic structures of Leninism, the underpinnings that ensured its success as the worldview of a "despotism without a despot, a democracy without citizens, of a proletariat without a working-class movement." No matter how we look into this story, Leninism was not an accident on the trajectory of modernity, but rather the proof that a certain threshold of the possible has been transcended and that the political realm contains as much the temptation of authoritarian regimentation as of civic liberty.

AVIYA KUSHNER

What Do You Do with Yourself After a Terror Attack?

ON THE STREET OF HOPE IN SOUTH TEL AVIV, long lines of Russian women in high heels and full makeup walk toward a house. The lines look endless. It's two days after a suicide bomber at the Dolphinarium dance club killed twenty-one teenagers and injured 120 more in a nasty, nail-studded blast, and the air in the city is thick and hot, the street sticky and alert.

Radios blare from the shops, broadcasting lists of names and ages. Every few minutes the lists are interrupted by a three-part routine: short eulogies delivered by siblings, followed by mothers' formless wails and the rhythmic shoveling of dirt on new graves. On the street of hope, which runs through a poor area known for decades as "the neighborhood of hope," the broadcast has personal meaning. This place, famous for spicy kebabs, Middle Eastern music, and new immigrants, has just lost more residents to terror.

I watch the women walk down the street for almost an hour before deciding to follow them. The lines lead to a wall filled with black-and-white signs of mourning in both Hebrew and Russian. Each sign says the same thing: "Yelena and Yulia Nelimov, aged eighteen and sixteen. Sisters killed in the tragedy."

I had read about these two sisters and seen photos of them on television, but suddenly, watching those long lines snake stoically to what I now understood was their apartment, I wanted to get to know Yelena and Yulia. I wanted to see a bit of their world.

"VISITING AFTER A TERROR ATTACK says a lot about you." That's what an old creased man said, sweeping the sidewalk in front of the synagogue near the Nelimov apartment. He knew something I was about to discover. The first mourners are often strangers. It starts with the social worker on the late shift, the cab driver the state pays to take you home from the hospital. Sometimes it starts earlier, with the ambulance driver, the emergency technician at the scene. Then, after it's definitely a death, hordes of strangers come. There are people in this country who pay a


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condolence visit, or a shiva call, to every single victim of terror. They drive distances, and they usually show up on the first or second day after the death.

While some people rush to soothe terror victims, others hide, retreating into their apartments, into silence. I fall somewhere in the middle. I'll listen to the news and then ignore it. I've come close to a few bombs. I was walking up Jaffa Street in Jerusalem, toward Ben Yehuda market, when a bomb exploded there, killing a politician's daughter. The 963, a bus line that snakes near the breathtaking scenery of the Jordanian border, was bombed—just at the time I'm often on it. I had postponed my trip, and the bomb killed the bomber, but no passengers. Everyone in Israel has stories like this.

With all the close calls, I've never really looked the horror in its face, never had blood on my arms or shattered glass hit my body. I've never even been in the home of an actual terror victim. This would be my first such after-the-bombing visit, and I wasn't sure what I'd find when I walked in. So I walked around the block nervously, adjusted my shirt, put my hair back, and tried somehow to look dressier, more appropriate. Then I came back to the apartment that was home to Yelena and Yulia.

The sisters lived above a noisy mini-market, where bare-chested workers were standing outside, spraying the sidewalk and themselves in the horrible heat. The market was doing a brisk business selling soda and juice to mourners who wanted to walk in with something, anything, to offer as a balm. I bought a six-pack of something cold. The clerk said nothing. We both knew what I was doing.

I walked up the stairs to the Nelimov home, a second-floor apartment painted white like everyone else's in the area, and sat on the porch. I was afraid to walk in, so I waited.

Red and yellow shirts waved in the occasional wind. The dog, parched, alternately barked and scrounged for water. I wanted to go in, but was embarrassed. I didn't know them. I could hear Russian, only Russian, not a word of Hebrew. Outside, a guy who introduced himself in Hebrew as Yelena's boyfriend—which later turned out to be a far-fetched description—started to talk to me. After two hours on the porch, during which he ranted about his economic problems and I sat quietly, he brought me inside.

I saw a circle of Russian men and women, and next to them a table piled with the round foods of mourning: eggs, plums, rolls. An elderly woman with a swollen foot kept trying to talk with me in Russian. Eventually, I understood that she was the girls' grandmother. I also

noticed six fourteen-year-old boys—friends of the girls' brother—scurrying around, bringing drinks. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see a second room—a bedroom—and inside it a dozen teenage girls in plaid-form shoes and close-fitting jeans. Eventually, the girls' mother and brother noticed me. Yelena's "boyfriend" told them I was from a newspaper. The mother nodded, and got up. I followed her. We went into the bedroom. Alex shared with his sister. Yulia's dresser was covered with memorial candles. Posters of actors and rock stars covered the walls. I tried not to look at them, because I wanted to listen. I had never thought about how a mother discovers that her children have been blown up.

On Friday night, the first of June, Ella Nelimov went out with a friend. Her daughters said they were going to a dance club in Tel Aviv. The girls put on their homemade anklers and dressed themselves up to party. They were friends, the sisters, who liked to go out together. A single mother who is the sole support of her three children and her mother, Ella was happy for the break. In slow but grammatically correct Hebrew, she said, "I was driving around with a friend, and I decided to turn on the radio. Just like that, just to see what was happening. I heard that there was a bomb at a club."

Ella didn't panic too much. Bombs go off several times a week; many are detonated without harm to bystanders. "On the radio, they said in five minutes, they'd tell the audience which club." So Ella and her friend kept driving. "Then they said a discotheque—Dolphinarium."

Ella called Alex at home. He said there were no names yet, so she picked him up and drove to the hospital nearest the club. They thought they'd recognize friends there, maybe someone who knew about the girls.

But no one did. "So we went on to another hospital, Ichilov Hospital," Ella recounted. "They also had no names. They showed me four pictures of girls they couldn't identify, scary pictures. I didn't recognize my girls. They said you should go to another hospital, to Abu Kabir."

Ella and Alex reached Abu Kabir, their third hospital of the night, at four in the morning. There, they were asked questions like, What did they look like? What were they wearing? What was their hair like, and their eyes? Did they wear earrings?

At six in the morning Ella went downstairs to look at the bodies. There wasn't much to identify. A hospital worker handed Ella two plastic bags. Each contained an anklet handmade by one of her daughters—all that was left of Yelena and Yulia.